United Nations S/2009/615

Security Council

Distr.: General
2 December 2009
English
Original: French

Letter dated 30 November 2009 from the Permanent Representative of Burkina Faso to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to convey to you herewith the concept paper for the Security Council open debate on "Peace and security in Africa: Drug trafficking as a threat to international security", to be held on 8 December 2009 (see annex).

I should be grateful if the text of the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Michel **Kafando**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

09-62854 (E) 031209 031209

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Annex to the letter dated 30 November 2009 from the Permanent Representative of Burkina Faso to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: English]

Concept paper by the Burkina Faso Presidency of the Security Council

Agenda item: Peace and security in Africa

Topic: Drug trafficking as a threat to international security

8 December 2009

During its Presidency of the Security Council in December 2009, Burkina Faso intends to organize, under the agenda item entitled "Peace and security in Africa", an open debate on "Drug trafficking as a threat to international security". The meeting is scheduled for 8 December 2009.

The main objectives of the debate are, on one hand, to raise awareness of the challenge posed to the international community by the increasing illicit cross-border and cross-regional drug trafficking and, on the other hand, to strengthen solidarity and cooperation in tackling this menace to international security.

The current extent of that scourge and its potential for destabilizing societies constitute genuine security risks in many countries and regions. In particular, the situation in African countries and Africa as a whole, which are already facing numerous challenges, is of great concern.

The reports of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, as well as various reports and studies, indicate that:

- Drug trafficking has a direct and negative impact on security and public health
- There is a link between drug trafficking, conflicts, proliferation of small arms, money-laundering, transnational crime and terrorism financing; countries emerging from conflict are particularly vulnerable
- Production of opium poppy, which reached its highest level ever in 2007, poses a threat to the lives of millions of people around the world
- The level of cocaine trafficking and the resulting violence remain high
- Synthetic drugs, more accessible to the poorest, are now part of the drug trafficking problem
- In the global drugs trade, Africa has become not only a growing transit area, but also a consumption region

For these reasons, greater international cooperation is needed and urgent.

Important efforts have already been made by the international community in that regard, including the establishment of mechanisms for the control of narcotics and psychotropic substances.[1]

In 1998, the United Nations General Assembly held its twentieth special session on the world drug problem, which provided an opportunity to Member States to reaffirm their commitment to overcome this problem through domestic and international integrated and balanced strategies.

They resolved, in particular, to fight money-laundering linked to drug trafficking, and to eliminate or significantly reduce the illicit manufacture and trade in drugs.

For their part, regional and subregional organizations, particularly in Africa, have taken substantial initiatives to counter drug proliferation. In October 2008 for instance, the Economic Community of West African States organized in Praia a Ministerial Conference which adopted a political declaration and an action plan.

Notwithstanding all these efforts, results remain very modest and more needs to be done. Regions like Africa that were initially only transit points, have even become centres for the production and processing of drugs, and drug-manufacturing laboratories are proliferating.

Drug trafficking is therefore a serious threat to international security.

As a result, the Security Council, which has the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, has an important role to play.

During the debate, delegations could, inter alia, address the following issues:

- The impact of drug trafficking on the socio-economic development of States and regions
- The link between drug trafficking, financing of conflict, organized transnational criminality, illicit arms trafficking and money-laundering
- The specific situation of some regions, including Africa, facing a continuous increase in the volume of trafficking, production and consumption
- The urgent need to strengthen international cooperation in eradicating this threat
- The strengthening of the international legal framework and the importance for all States to accede to international conventions
- The role of the Security Council
- The role of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the need to strengthen its capacities
- Coordination within the United Nations system
- The contribution of regional and subregional organizations
- The specific responsibilities of the producing, consumer and transit countries

[1] The Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, 1961, as amended by the 1972 Protocol; the Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971, and the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, of 1988.

- The need to strengthen the capacities of States, as well as regional and subregional organizations and actors
- The role of the civil society and the private sector

Burkina Faso would like to propose a Presidential statement for adoption as the outcome of the debate.